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C O N F I D E N T I A L FRANKFURT 006156

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [KISL](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [GM](#) [MO](#) [BINR](#)

SUBJECT: SEARCH OF FRANKFURT MOSQUE PROVOKES CONTROVERSY;
EVIDENCE UNCLEAR

REF: A) FRANKFURT 0567 B) 02 FRANKFURT 10187

Classified By: Consul General Peter W. Bodde, reasons 1.5(b) and (d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: Police searched Frankfurt's Taqwa ("Fear of Allah" in Arabic) mosque on July 11 in response to allegations that Taqwa's religious curriculum includes violent and extremist material. Justification for the raid centered on a 9-year old's statement to police that the mosque's school showed images glorifying violence and promoting attacks on non-Muslims as well as a videocassette allegedly purchased at Taqwa that includes footage of Muslim rebels and calls for jihad. Authorities say they confiscated numerous videotapes and digital storage devices as well as 19 computer hard drives and will need weeks to analyze the material. The raid provoked surprise and controversy, as Frankfurt's Office for Foreigners had considered the mosque to be relatively progressive. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) Over two hundred Frankfurt police armed with machine guns searched the Moroccan mosque Taqwa (located near the city's main train station) on July 11 after a statement alleging reports of material at the mosque's religious school demonizing "non-believers" and glorifying acts of violence against non-Muslims. The school enrolls over 300 students and receives partial funding from the Moroccan consulate. According to police, a 9-year-old student confided to a teacher at her German school that Taqwa was using brutal and extremist imagery (including that of a pregnant woman's stomach violently slashed) to promote attacks against non-Muslims.

3. (C) A Taqwa spokesman denied police allegations and demanded a public apology for the raid. The spokesman explained reports of police seizures of large quantities of high-tech equipment from Taqwa premises by noting that the material was part of a library that Taqwa kept for use by its congregation. In a subsequent statement, police qualified the raid by saying that the Taqwa mosque was not under suspicion and that authorities had no plans at present to press charges. Frankfurt's Commissioner for Foreigners, Albrecht Magen, called the police statement a contradiction and cited Taqwa's reputation as a moderate voice among Frankfurt's Muslims and its long record of participation in community initiatives such as "Mama lernt Deutsch (Mama learns German)", a program to teach German to immigrant mothers.

4. (C) Frankfurt law enforcement revealed on July 15 that they possessed a tape allegedly purchased in the Taqwa mosque glorifying violence and calling for attacks on non-Muslims. Authorities in Cologne discovered the tape and passed it to Frankfurt police. The video opens with footage of a red tulip blossoming and then moves to images of Muslim insurgencies in Afghanistan and Chechnya accompanied by calls for jihad. Police note that the tape was part of the evidence they presented to obtain a search warrant for the mosque.

5. (C) COMMENT: Frankfurt was home to a North African Islamic terrorist cell convicted of planning attacks against the Strasbourg Christmas Market in 2000 (ref B). As reported in the press, local politicians like city Social Democrat/SPD party manager Gregor Amman (who lives next door to the mosque) have cited Taqwa's strong community involvement and progressive reputation while criticizing the heavyhanded way in which police conducted the raid (including bringing a camera crew and failing to take their shoes off before entering the mosque.) Law enforcement authorities have adopted a cautious tone and say that it will take weeks to translate and analyze the material seized. Meanwhile, the incident has sparked a heated debate within Frankfurt on Muslim religious schools and their possible use as incubators for Islamist extremism. END COMMENT.

BODDE